children in India is 11.28 million. The figures of the 2001 census have not been published.

(d) No proposal to this effect has been received from the ILO.

National Wage Policy for Beedi Labourers

248. MISS MABEL REBELLO : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government would make a National Wage Policy for Beedi Labourers so that they may get equal wages all over the country;

(b) whether Government would take necessary steps to ensure that the Beedi magnates do not shift their Beedi manufacturing units to the States having lower wages for beedi making thereby rendering lakhs of beedi labourers without employment and on the verge of starvation in Madhya Pradesh; and

(c) how much allocation was made available in 2001-2002 to construct residential accommodation for beedi labourers in Madhya Pradesh ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN) : (a) and (b) A statement is enclosed. (*See* below).

(c) A subsidy amounting to Rs. 1.73 crore was sanctioned during the year for construction of 905 houses for the beedi workers in Madhya Pradesh in the year 2001-2002.

Statement

National Wage Policy for Beedi Workers

The Government has examined the issue of a National Wage Policy which has been discussed on many occasions in different fora. Since fixation of wages

depends on a number of factors like local conditions, cost of living and paying capacity, which varies from State to State and from Industry to Industry, it has not been found feasible to maintain uniformity in wages all over the country. The Indian Labour Conference, held in November 1985 expressed that "Till such time a national wage is feasible, it would be desirable to have regional minimum wages in regard to which the Central Government may lay down the guideline. The minimum wages should be revised at regular periodicity and should be linked with rise in the cost of living." Accordingly, the Government issued guidelines in July, 1987 for setting up of Regional Minimum Wages Advisory Committees. These Committees renamed subsequently as Regional Labour Ministers' Conferences, made a number of recommendations which include reduction in disparities in minimum wages in different States of a region, setting up of Inter-State Coordination Council and consultation with neighbouring States while fixing/revising minimum wages. In the absence of National Wage Policy, the Central Government introduced National Floor Level Minimum Wage, on the basis of the recommendations of the National Commission on Rural Labour. Presently the Floor Level Minimum Wage has been fixed at Rs. 45/- per day due to increase in the Consumer Price Index Number.

The Beedi & Cigar Workers (Conditions of Employment) Act, 1966 has been enacted by the Government to regulate working conditions and employment terms of Beedi & Cigar workers. This Act is enforced by the State Governments. The State Governments have framed corresponding Rules under this Act to enforce various provisions of the Act. The State Governments are advised from time to time to strictly enforce the provisions of the above concerned labour laws.

Irregularities in ITIs

†249. DR. A. K. PATEL : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that a lot of irregularities are being committed at the time of admissions being made in various trades in I.T.Is in Delhi;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.